

5 We claim:

1. An improved method for the manufacture of 4-(4-Benzofurazanyl)-1,4-dihydro-2,6-dimethyl-3,5-pyridinedicarboxylic acid methyl 1-methylethyl ester comprising the steps of :
  - 10 (i) reacting 2,1,3-benzoxadiazole-4-carboxaldehyde with methyl acetoacetate in the presence of acetic acid and piperidine in diisopropyl ether to obtain 2-acetyl-3-benzofurazan-4-yl-acrylic acid methyl ester;
  - 15 (ii) isolating and purifying 2-acetyl-3-benzofurazan-4-yl-acrylic acid methyl ester to obtain purified 2-acetyl-3-benzofurazan-4-yl-acrylic acid methyl ester and
  - 20 (iii) reacting 2-acetyl-3-benzofurazan-4-yl-acrylic acid methyl ester with isopropyl-β-aminocrotonate in ethanol to obtain 4-(4-Benzofurazanyl)-1,4-dihydro-2,6-dimethyl-3,5-pyridinedicarboxylic acid methyl 1-methylethyl ester.
2. An improved process as claimed in claim 1 wherein step (iii) is carried out at 25 to 40 °C.
- 25 3. An improved process as claimed in claim 2 wherein step (iii) is carried out at 25 to 35 °C.
- 30 4. An improved process as claimed in claim 1 wherein about 0.9 to 1.1 mol of methyl acetoacetate is used for every 1.0 mol of 2,1,3-benzoxadiazole-4-carboxaldehyde.

- 5 5. An improved process as claimed in claim 4 wherein about 0.95 to 1.0. mol  
of methyl acetoacetate is used for every 1.0 mol of 2,1,3-benzoxadiazole-4-  
carboxaldehyde.
- 10 6. An improved process as claimed in claim 1 wherein acetic acid and  
piperidine are used in catalytic amount.
- 15 7. An improved process as claimed in claim 6 wherein about 0.25 to 3.0 mol  
of acetic acid and about 0.8 to 0.06 mol of piperidine is used for every 1  
mol of 2,1,3-benzoxadiazole-4-carboxaldehyde
- 20 8. An improved process as claimed in claim 1 wherein the 2-acetyl-3-  
benzofurazan-4-yl-acrylic acid methyl ester obtained in step ( ii) is  
crystallized from diisopropyl ether to obtain pure 2-acetyl-3-benzofurazan-  
4-yl-acrylic acid methyl ester.
- 25 9. An improved process as claimed in claim 1 wherein about 0.9 to 1.05 mol  
of isopropyl- $\beta$ -aminocrotonate is used for every 1 mol of 2-acetyl-3-  
benzofurazan-4-yl-acrylic acid methyl ester.
10. An improved process as claimed in claim 9 wherein about 0.9 to 1.00 mol  
of isopropyl- $\beta$ -aminocrotonate is used for every 1 mol of 2-acetyl-3-  
benzofurazan-4-yl-acrylic acid methyl ester.
- 30 11. A process for purification of 2-acetyl-3-benzofurazan-4-yl-acrylic acid  
methyl ester by recrystallization from a solvent.
12. A process according to claim 11 wherein the preferred solvents are chosen  
from ethers, alcohols and mixtures thereof.

- 5 13. A process according to claim 11, wherein the 2-acetyl-3-benzofurazan-4-yl-acrylic acid methyl ester thereafter is converted to isradipine.